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M.V.A. FINAL VISUAL PRESENTATION

by

SIDSEL NAESS BRADLEY

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF VISUAL ARTS

IN

SCULPTURE  
DEPARTMENT OF ART AND DESIGN

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL 1991



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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend  
to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a  
thesis entitled:

MVA FINAL VISUAL PRESENTATION

submitted by SIDSEL NAESS BRADLEY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of  
Visual Arts.



The University of Alberta

RELEASE FORM

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DEGREE FOR WHICH THESIS WAS GRANTED MASTER OF VISUAL ARTS

YEAR THIS DEGREE WAS GRANTED 1991

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DEPARTMENT OF ART AND DESIGN

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I hereby release the following works for incorporation into the University Collections, University of Alberta, as part of the Master of Visual Arts Thesis Collection:

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>MEDIUM</u>	<u>SIZE</u>
Pillar Series #3	1989-91	fired clay, wood and steel	185 x 148 x 112 cm
The Pillar Series #1	1990-91	mixed media on rag paper	112 x 1356 cm





Sidsel Naess  
Bradley

*The Pillar Series*

This exhibition is  
the final visual  
presentation in  
partial fulfilment of  
the requirements for  
the degree of  
Master of Visual Arts

October 23 to November 3, 1991

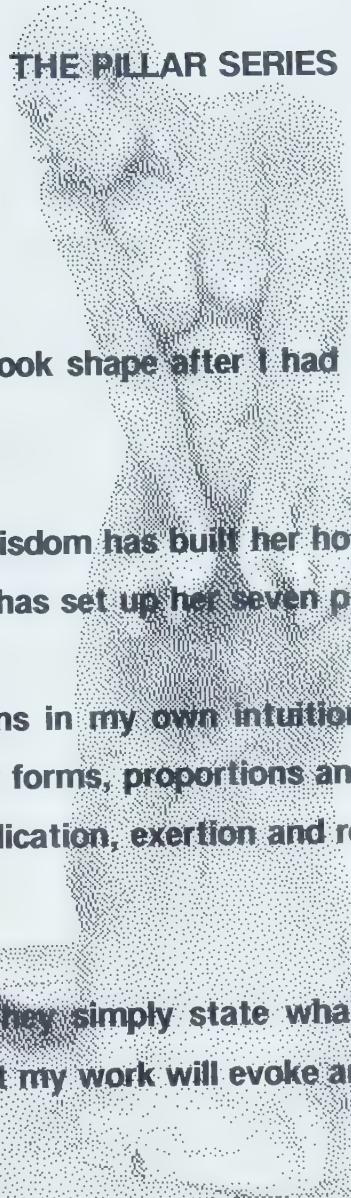
*Opening Reception*  
Thursday, October 24  
7pm to 10pm

**fab**  
Fine Arts Building

Department of Art and Design  
University of Alberta

Gallery

1-1 Fine Arts Building  
Tuesday to Friday  
10am - 5pm  
Gallery Hours:  
Sunday 2pm-5pm  
Closed Saturday, Monday and  
Statutory Holidays  
(403) 492-2081  
Edmonton, Canada T6G 2C9  
112 Street and 89 Avenue  
University of Alberta



## THE PILLAR SERIES

**The title for my show took shape after I had read a passage from the Bible, Proverbs 9:**

**"Wisdom has built her house;  
She has set up her seven pillars."**

**The series has its origins in my own intuition. It corresponds to my innermost imaginings of forms, proportions and rhythms as I juxtapose simplification and complication, exertion and relaxation; breathing.**

**Titles are referential. They simply state what is there, clearly visible. Beyond that, I hope that my work will evoke an empathic response from each of my viewers.**



## FIRST YEAR

During the first year of my Masters program I studied almost exclusively figurative work in clay. The pieces came to life painfully and tentatively. Column-like female forms seemed the most challenging. To make soft clay stand upright, to challenge gravity with heavy weights and twists, and making it all work without falling down, was a victory. The upright poses needed a heavy base for stability, which gave each piece a sense of being earth-bound.

My son had recently visited Greece and brought home a wealth of photographs from the museums there. I became fascinated by the fragments; broken heads, armless torsos, ruined columns, remnants of the incredible beauty of archaic sculptures. They seemed imbued with a presence one could feel.

One day I found a photocopy of a male plaster figure in the studio area. It caught my full attention. Its limbs were slim and unnatural-looking; the surface clearly showed the undulating, bulging mass of exposed muscle tissue. The expression on the face etched into my memory. I learned later that it was a piece by Joseph Beuys; it may well have been of himself. I had to find out what was hiding behind that tortured form. So I built a life-size steel armature, meaning to make a series of walking males, using the identical armature for the whole series.

By now it was the end of my second semester and time to leave for my planned study year in Europe. In anticipation of Professor Neil Fiertel's absence on Sabbatical, I had made arrangements to study at the National Academy in Oslo and then to travel through Europe: Denmark, Germany, Northern Italy, France and Spain.

## MY SISTER'S ISLAND

At first, the island was a haven; lots of rest, visits with the family, a healing process. Bit by bit I became more aware of this little island, and what was going on: boatbuilding, boats stored, boats under heavy tarpaulins; massive concrete slabs, iron rails, stacks of wooden objects, metal pipes; the shoreline littered with man's handiwork in various stages of decay; old wooden workshops cluttered with outdated equipment, scarred wooden workbenches, wedges and woodshavings covering the earth floor, coils of rope hanging down from the ceiling. It was rich, rich in visual images.



I cleared out a corner in the large workshop and built myself a painting wall and long ledges where I could assemble my finds in a somewhat organized fashion, then started collecting interesting objects: rusted metal, decayed lumber, boxes. I stuffed rope into mesh containers, and tried them in interesting combinations of material and placement. This became my exploratory studio space. No work at this time was taken to a conclusion.

## TRAVEL

Europe is steeped in history. Statues are everywhere: heroic figures in the squares, archaic fragments in museums, Etruscan fired clay figures cracked and broken. The rooms are filled with a pervasive stillness, the pieces on display invaded by space. I was drawn into their spaces, felt an intense excitement. It was like looking at a Rothko painting, feeling the passing of time, sensing its wear and tear. At the same time I was conscious of the artifacts of our own time, pieced together using steel and concrete, placed on plain linear ledges and wooden plinths. They have created an environment combining the past and the present.

In Northern Italy I found myself surrounded by the Renaissance. Michelangelo, Donatello, Rogier van der Weyden, Botticelli, their statues and paintings are on every hand. Madonnas and crucifixes in every conceivable form and colour. Circular, empty courtyards framed with heavy stone pillars, empty, yet dense with this astonishing silence. Outdoor statuary is marked by time and by weather, creating wonderful surfaces and changed expressions. Some of their faces seemed to be streaked with tears and sorrows.

## SECOND YEAR

In the beginning of my second year, I started to experiment with shapes which were interesting to me. My work area filled up with all kinds of objects and treasures; from a departing Edmonton artist I bought broken marble columns, limestone pillars, precious onyx and slabs of heavy stone. My sense of scale was enriched by great wooden blocks abandoned and forgotten in the yards of construction companies. Their surface was marred by time and decay. I experienced an intense excitement in finding these objects, and I hauled them into the studio.



## DRAWINGS

I started drawing. This basic skill is fundamental to all my art. Betty Goodwin states that the medium of drawing channels the energy of invisible forces "through action to organized form". It is also the simplest way of establishing a picture vocabulary because, as with wet clay, the imprint is instantaneous and quickly becomes a personal declaration of what is important and what is not. It is at this point that the conscious choices come into the process, developing what is important to continue and obscuring the rest.

The accidental encounter with the media allows the unexpected into the works, conjuring up endless possibilities of images. I tried, for instance, pouring turpentine onto paper and smearing oilsticks onto the wet surface. Combined with charcoal and black spraypaint, it was immensely rewarding. The spraypaint left a soft, shadowy form against the strong surface texture of the oilstick. The effect of ripped paper collaged over figure studies took me by surprise, and this encounter with spatial ambiguity and intrigue excited me in a way that I had not felt for a long time.

## SCULPTURES

The Pillar Series emerged before my eyes. The armature for the Walking Male series was still there, made up more than a year ago. I made the three figures of hydrostone, combining a modern material with age-old techniques. Delving further into this notion of The Pillar, I built the female columnar figures, caryatids in a modern idiom, adding columns and other objects in juxtaposition to explore the interaction of solid form and intervening space. I constantly look for these exciting surprises in my work. It becomes important to explore combinations of different media, different methods.

**It keeps my senses sharp.**

Sidsel Naess Bradley

October 1991



LABEL INFORMATION FORM

Name of Artist/Designer: S N BRADLEY  
(as you wish it to appear on the label beside your work)

\*\* Title of Work #: PILLAR SERIES # 1 Year: 1988-89

Medium: FIRED CLAY, GLAZED Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 112

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 96 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 40  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: PILLAR SERIES # 2 Year: 1989-91

Medium: FIRED CLAY, GLAZED, WHITE Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 180

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 140 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 140  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: PILLAR SERIES # 3 Year: 1989-91

Medium: FIRED CLAY, GLAZED, OIFAL Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 185

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 148 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 112  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: PILLAR SERIES # 4 Year: 1990-91

Medium: FIRED CLAY, GLAZED, GLAZED Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 144.5

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 117.5 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 41  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)



2

LABEL INFORMATION FORM

Name of Artist/Designer: J N Bradley  
(as you wish it to appear on the label beside your work)

\*\* Title of Work #: Pillar Series # 5 Year: 1991

Medium: fired clay, wood Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 147.5  
acrylic paint  
Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 79.5 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 55  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: Pillar Series # 6 Year: 1990-91

Medium: fired clay, acrylic paint Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 206.5  
wood  
Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 145 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 48  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: Pillar Series # 7 Year: 1990-91

Medium: fired clay, acrylic paint Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 195  
wood  
Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 62.5 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 41  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: Pillar Series # 8 Year: 1991

Medium: fired clay, onyx, wood Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 103  
  
Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 179.5 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 64  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)



3

LABEL INFORMATION FORM

Name of Artist/Designer: S N Bradley  
(as you wish it to appear on the label beside your work)

\*\* Title of Work #: Male Torso with Capital Year: 1989-91

Medium: fired clay, wood, limestone Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 153

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 115 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 97.5  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: Table Arrangement with Female Head Year: 1990-91

Medium: wood, plaster, fired clay Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 164

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 124.5 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 158  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: Blocks of wood with Male Head Year: 1988-91

Medium: fired clay, wood, steel Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 129.5

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 191 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 141.5  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: Portrait Head Year: 1990-91

Medium: ceramic, acrylic paint Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 101.5

Cement, wood, Steel Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 43.5 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 47  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)



LABEL INFORMATION FORM

Name of Artist/Designer: S N BRADLEY  
(as you wish it to appear on the label beside your work)

\*\* Title of Work #: MALE HEAD INVERTED Year: 1940-41

Medium: PAINTED WOOD Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 154.5

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 49 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 24  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: FEMALE HEAD INVERTED Year: 1940-41

Medium: PAINTED WOOD Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 169

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 65 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 30  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: MALE HEAD Year: 1940-41

Medium: PAINTED WOOD Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 131

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 50 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 28  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: SPRAY PAINTED WOOD Year: 1940-41

Medium: PAINTED WOOD Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 122  
SPRAYPAINT, WOOD

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 130 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 31  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)



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LABEL INFORMATION FORM

Name of Artist/Designer: Sin Bradley  
(as you wish it to appear on the label beside your work)

\*\* Title of Work #: Fragmentation Steel and Wood Year: 1989-91

Medium: dried clay; acrylic paint Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 38  
wood, steel  
Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 33.5 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 46  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: Female Torso Broken Year: 1989-90

Medium: dried clay Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 71.5  
Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 38 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 16.5  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: Fragments on Steel Frame Year: 1989-91

Medium: dried clay; acrylic paint Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 148  
plaster, wood, steel  
Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 12.3 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 6.5  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: Walking Male Series #1 Year: 1990-91

Medium: hydro stone, steel Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 196.5  
Spray paint  
Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 70 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 76  
(for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)



LABEL INFORMATION FORM

Name of Artist/Designer: SN Bradkey  
 (as you wish it to appear on the label beside your work)

\*\* Title of Work #: Walking Male Series # 2 Year: 1991

Medium: hydrostone, steel Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 195

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 62 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 65  
 (for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: Walking Male Series # 3 Year: 1991

Medium: hydrostone, steel Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 192.5

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 54 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 66  
 (for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Medium: \_\_\_\_\_ Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) \_\_\_\_\_

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) \_\_\_\_\_ Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: Two Torsos Floating Year: 1990

Medium: conte on rag paper Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 50

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 70 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)



LABEL INFORMATION FORM

Name of Artist/Designer: SH BRADLEY  
 (as you wish it to appear on the label beside your work)

\*\* Title of Work #: STUDY FOR PILLAR SERIES Year: 1990

Medium: FIRRED CLAY Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 33,5

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 10 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 12  
 (for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: BROKEN (STUDY) TORSO Year: 1990

Medium: FIRRED CLAY Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 20

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 21,5 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 7,5  
 (for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: THE PILLAR SERIES # 1 Year: 1990-91

Medium: MIXED MEDIA ACRYLIC SPRAYPAINT, OILSTICK, CHARCOAL, GRAPHITE ON RAG PAPER Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 112

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 1356 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

\*\* Title of Work #: THE PILLAR SERIES # 3 Year: 1990-91

Medium: RAG PAPER, OILSTICK, CHARCOAL, GRAPHITE, ACETATE, WASHING TAPE Height (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 112

Width (inches) \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) 152 Depth (inches): \_\_\_\_\_ OR (cm) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (for 3-D works)

Insurable Value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (It is essential that an insurable value be included even if the work is not for sale)

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